

# LABOUR

**JULY 1948**

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# ORGANISER

## SITUATIONS VACANT

**COLNE VALLEY D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Secretary and Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from **Mr. S. Eastwood, Socialist Club, Slaithwaite, near Huddersfield, Yorkshire**, and should be returned not later than July 20th, 1948.

**LOWESTOFT D.L.P.** invites applications for the post of **Full-time Agent and Secretary**; the appointment to be made in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms may be obtained from **Councillor A. E. Pye, 64 Grove Road, Beccles, Suffolk**, to whom they must be returned not later than July 31st.

**WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH LABOUR PARTY.**—Applications are invited for the position of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms from **Councillor C. W. Hill, 45 North Road, Wolverhampton**, to whom they must be returned not later than August 7th, 1948.

**EAST WALTHAMSTOW D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Agent**. The appointment will be made in accordance with the conditions of the National Agreement. The Executive Committee are prepared to pay more than the minimum as a commencing salary for an experienced Agent. Application forms can be obtained from **Councillor Bernard J. O. Browning, J.P., 169 Hale End Road, Walthamstow, London, E.17**, to whom they should be returned not later than Saturday, July 31st, 1948.

**GLASGOW CITY L.P.** invites applications for an **Assistant Organiser** to deal exclusively with Party Organisation in Glasgow. Excellent opportunity for keen man or woman to build up successful Parties following Redistribution. Salary £400 p.a. rising to £475. Application forms may be obtained from **A. Fleming, Secretary Glasgow City Labour Party, 69 Ingram Street, Glasgow, C.1**, and completed forms to be returned by August 14th, 1948.

**READING LABOUR PARTY** require the services of a **Woman Assistant** to share the work of the office, act as **Secretary** to the Women's Central Committee, and assist with the work of Women's Sections. Commencing salary £325. Application to **H. G. Grierson, The Labour Hall, 59 Minster Street, Reading**, not later than July 20th.

**EAST HAM SOUTH D.L.P.** invites applications for the post of **Full-time Agent**. The appointment to be made in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from the **Secretary, Mr. C. C. Callcott, 64 Chariemont Road, East Ham, London, E.6**, to whom they must be returned not later than Saturday, August 21st, 1948.

**BIRMINGHAM BOROUGH LABOUR PARTY** require additional **Full-time Agents** to work under the Borough Party Organisation in a group agency scheme. Appointments to be made in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms may be obtained from **J. H. Nash, Birmingham Borough Labour Party, Paradise Street, Birmingham 1**, to whom they must be returned not later than Saturday, August 28th, 1948.

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# The Labour Organiser

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## THE WAY AHEAD

THE Annual Conference at Scarborough was a disappointment to the sensation-mongers of the popular Press, but to Party members it was a demonstration of the fundamental unity of the Party, and of its sense of realism, which has grown steadily in recent years.

Delegates showed an awareness of the great task which faces the Party in preparing for the General Election of 1950. They agreed to the suggested procedure for the reorganisation of Constituency Parties and the problem of candidates following redistribution as well as to a further amendment of the Hastings decisions.

By this amendment the yearly amount which a candidate, or his sponsoring organisation, may pay towards the upkeep of a constituency organisation has been increased from £200 to £250 in a Borough, and from £250 to £300 in a County constituency. Consequent upon this decision, the Grant-in-aid Scheme has been amended to permit payments to a constituency employing a full-time agent which receives less than the new maximum amounts which may be paid by the candidate or his financing organisation.

This amendment and the provisions of the Supplementary Grant Scheme should make it possible for many more Parties to consider the appointment of full-time agents. There has been a welcome increase in the number of agency appointments in the past few months, but there are too few men and women devoting their whole time to the work of the Party. The task of reorganisation, the fighting of elections for all local authorities next spring, and the perfecting of election machinery in readiness for the coming General Election, are rather more than our excellent voluntary workers can be expected to cope with, especially in these days when so many of them are involved in local administration.

*We cannot hope to compete in full-time professional organisers with the Conservative Party, but there is no reason why in the next few months we should not double the number of those employed.*

The need is particularly great in the large divided boroughs, and Birmingham is the first to experiment with a scheme for the employment of organisers under the direction of the City Party secretary, who will be responsible for the Party machine in the whole of the Birmingham constituencies. If this experiment proves successful it might be adopted by other cities.

A number of rural and semi-rural constituencies are examining the practicability of employing an organiser for a group of constituencies; others are going forward boldly with the intention of employing a full-time agent for each constituency.

It is generally accepted that the circumstances of the next election will be much less favourable for Labour than they were in 1945. Apart from anything else, it is a well-known fact that the British electorate very rarely returns a party administration for a second term of office.

*There is not the slightest doubt that election machinery will count much more next time than it did last and in organisation Labour has fallen behind the Tories in recent months in some respects. With just less than two years at our disposal we can put matters to rights and give the Tories a sound beating in 1950.*

# AGENCY SERVICE

## Recruitment and Training

★  
LACK of policy in connection with the training of Agents in the elements of their work so that they have a thorough understanding of the limitations under which they work due to the Party's present financial structure is now resulting in a dearth of suitable candidates for the many new appointments that have to be made.

Faced with the necessity of now expanding the Party's agency staff, some practical scheme becomes an absolute priority and there is every reason to believe that the N.E.C. would be prepared to consider suggestions sympathetically and to operate such

proposals as were agreed upon, facing up even to the financial questions involved where a scheme of "apprenticeship" or "scholarship" is involved.

It seems, however, that any scheme which is eventually adopted must have one fundamental objective—namely, the provision of practical training for potential agents in constituency work under the supervision of an experienced full-time Agent before appointment to a constituency. On this point the E.C. is firmly *AGREED*.

Now let us consider the problem and its possible solution.

### METHOD OF RECRUITMENT

A PART from the value to the Party of having a recognised channel of recruitment which will produce the best type of men and women for eventual employment, the Union is convinced that it is impossible to raise the status of the Agency service unless recruitment into the service is regularised leading to good appointments which will earn respect in the constituencies and reflect credit upon the service as a whole. It seems to me that recruitment of suitable personnel is a two-fold problem.

#### Stimulation of Interest

An interest in electioneering, organisations and method must be stimulated in the minds of young party members and the Party's organising service presented to them in the most favourable light as a desirable avenue of service to the movement. Here are some of the avenues that already exist and which could be used for this purpose—

(a) *The Labour Organiser*.—Shifting of the emphasis from purely organisational matters to the desirability of entering the agency service of the Party. Help could be given by Party Agents taking a greater interest in this journal.

#### (b) *Study Course Scheme*.

Through the development of proficiency or training course schemes on a wider basis than now obtains for party officers rather than agents or potential agents.

(c) *Classes and Schools*.—These could be arranged together with Week-end and Day Schools following in areas by District Organisers and taken by Party Agents. The Party's organising and agency staff would then be brought into touch with a large number of people interested in organisation and would be able to form judgments as to suitability for full-time employment. The standard of efficiency of the "rank-and-file" organisational workers would be raised and much greater uniformity of method would be obtained.

Greater emphasis could be given at annual conference to the value of agency service and by members of the N.E.C. on public platforms. Special articles in the "Daily Herald" might be used to stimulate interest and through these media and those enumerated above a pool of contacts likely to make good agents could be established.

● Here are the proposals on the training and recruitment of agency staff, presented by the Executive Committee of the National Union of Labour Organisers and Election Agents and accepted unanimously by the Union's Annual Conference held at Scarborough on May 16th. They will now form the basis for discussion between the Union and the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party.



ABLE men and women willing to devote their lives to the Party's service or anxious to determine whether they were suitable for this form of employment should be *nominated* for further and special training. The essential point here seems to be who does the nominating and I would suggest that the normal avenues should be (a) Party agency staff; (b) Party organising staff; (c) the Director of Study Courses; and (d) the Divisional Labour Parties.

Persons so nominated would then proceed to take (probably while still in existing employment) a special "Qualifying Course" run by the Director of Studies. Subjects would obviously include Electoral Law, Party Organisation, Electioneering Methods, and possibly, and I think necessarily, English,

Office systems and methods, and Elementary Psychology.

These subjects would be backed up by "Day Schools" at which Party Agents would lecture and which might be arranged by the Union's District Committees and by organised visits to the offices of parties having full-time agents where short talks on methods of record keeping, etc., could be given. Week-end schools at which discussions on common organisational problems would be initiated would also be useful.

At the end of each course the best and most promising students, based upon an assessment of their written work and the personal observations of tutors with whom they had come into contact would be "starred" and these starred pupils would then be offered an opportunity for further practical training in agency work.

## TRAINING OF A POTENTIAL AGENT

WHAT is desired is that the "starred" pupil, who has now become a potential agent, should receive practical experience in the various types of constituency, rural and industrial, county or single member. This would involve a considerable period of time and I would say that a year would not be unreasonable.

This training needs to be full-time if it is to be of real and lasting value and this raises the question of finance. How are the "trainees" to be paid while qualifying for full-time appointment? The obvious solution is that, if training is felt to be desirable, Head Office must be prepared to (a) meet the whole cost of training, or (b) make a Grant-in-Aid to those constituencies willing to take a "trainee" as an organising assistant and to allow their Agent to undertake the task of training same.

The first proposition seems to me to be impracticable in present circumstances, but the second is possible if provision could be made immediately

from the development grant. Its value to the movement would become apparent so speedily that permanent provision should be possible.

Once agreement on this essential point of finance is reached a number of matters arise.

A panel of approved constituencies and agents to undertake this further training would have to be prepared.

The Union's District Committees could co-operate by arranging special lectures and discussions for "trainees" in their areas.

Some method would have to be provided to bring these trainees into Union membership, perhaps as Associates, since it would be undesirable to enrol them as full members until such time as they had completed their training and secured appointments.

The employment of a trainee as Agent in a "training constituency" would have to be prohibited (except on the retirement of the established

Agent) to safeguard any unjustified termination of employment of the Agent by a D.L.P. in order to secure a "trainee" at a lower rate of pay.

The trainee would serve in a particular type of constituency and would then be transferred (circumstances permitting). Transfers would have to be two way—as one trainee went out another would have to come in as otherwise the work of the D.L.P.s undertaking training would be disrupted.

Constituency Agents would render reports to the Director of Studies, the National Agent, and the Agents' Union

on the suitability and ability of the trainee.

These reports would be considered at the Adjustments Board and candidates considered suitable would be added to a national panel of fully-trained organising assistants suitable for a full-time appointment.

All appointments would be advertised as at the moment. Applications would be confined to full-time Agents seeking a change of constituency and the panel of trained organising assistants submitted by the N.E.C. The local party would make its choice from these in consultation with the District Organisers.

## OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTION

IF a comprehensive scheme along these lines were adopted, either in whole or in part, the problem of making agency service sufficiently attractive to appeal to the best type of men and women would have to be considered afresh. It ought to be possible for agency work to provide a reasonable measure of security, a fair rate of pay consistent with the responsibilities, and reasonable opportunities for promotion and advancement, so that an individual's gifts, as experience grows, are used in a wider field of activity.

Such opportunities can and must be provided. Looked at in detail the possibilities are:—

- (1) Organising Assistant to a D.L.P. as a first step towards full-time

agency appointment following a "qualifying" study course.

- (2) Appointment as agent in a con-  
to (a) special constituencies with advanced organisations and heavy responsibilities; (b) as Borough Organiser having general responsibility for several constituencies in a County Borough; (c) Area constituency.
- (3) With experience, an appointment Organiser for a group of constituencies.
- (4) Promotion to Assistant Regional Organiser or to the Regional Organiser's staff with special responsibilities for a certain area.
- (5) Appointment as Regional Organiser.

## EMPLOYING BODIES

THE varying levels and responsibilities outlined above would involve differential rates of remuneration with the Charter proposals providing agreed minimums and the grading of constituencies, etc., in terms of responsibility. Unless, or until, Head Office is prepared to make a new approach to the problem of party finance with special relation to the provision of and payment of organising staff at all levels it would seem that financial responsibility would have to be shared as between the (a) National Party (Grants-in-Aid, Development Grants, Special Grants, etc.); (b) interested parties, i.e., Trade Unions, candidates and M.P.s.; (c) the local Labour Parties; (d) Federa-

tions of Labour Parties or Regional Councils.

These matters must be considered if agency work is not to become a "blind alley" job failing to attract or to hold men and women who wish to render service to the movement and if we are to provide an organisational service which will be of a really national character.

All this is not intended to reflect unfavourably upon the existing study course scheme which, within its limitations, has done and is doing excellent work. What is suggested is a reorientation of policy in regard to the provision of study scheme facilities and that these facilities should be directed to a different end.

## The Agent's Trump Card

By HAROLD CROFT

It will be recollected that the question posed for answer in my first article was in effect: "What can a newly-appointed Agent do to give an immediate, if modest, impression of improving things?" My answer was: "Do a little stage-management in respect to the General Committee meeting to improve them." This answer was given because the inadequacy of preparation for these meetings is a common lack in parties and a new Agent could by a little thought stage something of interest and effect.

Let me quote an example which, simple as it is, embodies the gist of my suggestion. A new Agent put "Welcome to New Delegates" on the G.C. agenda. He mentioned to the chairman that three new T.U. delegates had been notified to him; would the chairman say a few appropriate words. The little procedure arrested the pleasant attention of delegates, and the Agent heard appreciative comments, "We've never had this before!" The new Agent had produced a good effect by a little prior thought about the meeting. It was a simple piece of stage-management.

### Tact and Diplomacy Needed

In most cases a new Agent taking thought to stage some procedure of the General Committee would not find any forbidding difficulties in his path, but there could be cases where he would find himself embarrassed by a bad chairman or self-willed officials who have been used to having their own haphazard way. What is to be done in such cases? The position would call for some tact and diplomacy, but the Agent has a trump card in his hand and if he plays it well the chances are he will be successful.

The card is "Standing Orders for the Transaction of Business." Suppose these have fallen into disuse and delegates have not got copies. The new Agent can quietly have copies duplicated. He can put an unobtrusive item "Standing Orders" on the agenda. When this item is reached he can in a very civil way indicate that naturally on taking up his work he desired to

know and keep to the Standing Orders of the G.C. It appeared that only an odd copy or two was available, so he had had copies duplicated (here he causes them to be handed round) so that all delegates can have them for reference. And ingratiatingly he will conclude in remarking that as their Agent he will conform to their Standing Orders. He will have produced a psychological effect on the Committee, and with due persistence he will secure regard for the Standing Orders.

Take an illustration. Suppose there has been slackness in starting meetings. The Agent can, as soon as a quorum is present, either get the chairman, if he is a reasonable person, to start the meeting, or he can rise and invoke the Standing Orders, pointing out that a quorum is present, and suggest proceedings begin. The quorum will rise to the bait which gives them credit for early attendance and a smile at the astonished late-comers, who find business goes on without them. Reasonable punctuality has been inculcated by the gentle art of using Standing Orders in virtue's cause.

### A Really Bad Case

But what if the case is really a bad one and there are no Standing Orders and procedures are wayward? The Agent can proceed as above in putting an item on the agenda and press for an interim adoption of the Model Standing Orders set out in the pamphlet "Party Organisation" (adapted to requirements). Once the new Agent has got a set of Standing Orders in use he can depend on the sensible delegates supporting proper regard for them; indeed, such delegates will themselves invoke the provisions when slack or bad officials take undue liberties.

*The new agent's real purpose in getting Standing Orders into use is because respect and regard for them insensibly raises the tone and competence of the General Committee. They are not red-tape, they are a means for securing orderly transaction of business which is the first step towards getting good administration in a party.*

(To be continued)

# Highlights of Agents' Conference

By L. H. M. HILLIARD, General Secretary, Agents' Union

Annual Conference this year was well attended, well conducted, and on the whole well worth while! Much useful work was done and the adoption of the General Secretary's memorandum on the "Training and Recruitment of Agents" (see pages 4 to 6), was, by its implications, as important a decision as that taken last year to adopt the Charter proposals. In fact the two things are complementary and a good deal of thought will have to be given to this matter during the coming year.

No time was lost when conference assembled on the Saturday evening. The E.C. proposed that Agents Fagan (Bolton) and Todd (Whitechapel) should be appointed tellers which was agreed after which a report of last year's conference was considered.

The Chairman, Joe Davies (Swansea), addressed the members present and covered a wide field reviewing the work of the Executive during the past year and outlining some of the matters which would closely engage the attention of this body during the coming months. He emphasised the Union's desire to see a nation-wide agency network but indicated that a new approach to this problem would be needed.

No changes in officership took place. Messrs. Clem Jones and Charlie Luker were re-appointed Auditors, unopposed, as was the General Secretary. A few changes, however, take place on the Union Executive and the Chairman expressed the good wishes of the conference to Fred Watson who retires from this body after many years of service.

## Membership Figures

The Executive Committee's report was adopted without too much controversy although the Executive found it necessary on occasion to make its position clear in relation to some of the matters on the report. Attempts were made to "move back" sections dealing with "Magisterial Appointments" and the "Hastings Agreement" but these were defeated. Some disappointment was expressed at the figures of membership presented. A large increase had been anticipated during the past year but, in fact, a decrease in the number of full-time agents was disclosed. There is reason to feel that an

error had crept into previous figures for many new appointments have been made recently.

It is, nevertheless, a fact that steps taken by Head Office to secure the expansion of the agency service have not, as yet, resulted in major increases.

It was explained, however, that this position will change. *The "Grant-in-Aid" scheme, plus the development and special grants together with the revision of the Hastings Agreement is now stimulating appointments and the tempo is rising. The Executive anticipate a substantial increase during the coming year.*

## Union Finances

Although there is room for improvement it was disclosed that the union's financial position is sound. Increased activity; discussions and consultations on the Charter proposals had meant an increase in administrative costs while at the same time it appeared as if contributions were down, substantially. In fact this was not the case, it being largely a matter of book-keeping and the special difficulties experienced by London towards the end of last year with the sudden death of "Dick" Montford, which had produced this position.

The Union was trying to give real service to its members—a reorganisation of record keeping was planned—uniformity of method was being introduced, new equipment was needed, and a more permanent and satisfactory basis of full-time clerical help was needed.

All these things would cost money and it was hoped that, from a substantially increased membership would be derived an income adequate to our needs.

## Mr. Windle's Visit

Sunday morning's session saw the National Agent at conference. Addressing the members he mentioned that his job as Secretary to the Standing Orders Committee of the Labour Party had kept him away from conferences in the past. He had now passed this responsibility to Len Williams and in consequence he was able to join the agents at their Annual Conference.

Dick Windle dealt at some length with the Party's plans for the develop-

ment of the agency service and indicated his pleasure that the Union had worked out a plan providing for the training and recruitment of agency staff which he agreed was a desirable thing. He hoped that the Adjustments Board would be considering these proposals in the near future and stated that, although differences may have arisen from time to time as between the Union and the Adjustments Board they were honest differences, on matters of principle, and had not detracted from the otherwise close and friendly relations that had been established. Consultation as between the Union and the Party went on continuously—he hoped that it always would. The Chairman expressed pleasure at having the National Agent present and a “free for all” discussion was then initiated on the whole matter of agency development, recruitment and training.

Many members took part, an outstanding contribution to the discussion coming from John Taylor (Scottish Organiser) and finally, the General Secretary’s memorandum (reported else-

where in this issue), was carried after Harold Nash, for the Executive had wound up and dealt with questions.

London District, the only district that had resolutions on the agenda proved most accommodating. Having listened to the financial report “Vic” Butler, London’s Secretary, indicated that he would accept the motion as amended by the Executive Committee relating to the provision of clerical assistance and similar action was taken in relation to “Representation at Annual Conference. At the request of the Executive, and in the light of the recommendations contained in the Memorandum adopted by conference, London’s resolution on agency aspirants was withdrawn.

And so, this year’s conference ended, on what most of us thought was a high note—with our discussion lifted to a level above that which has characterised past conferences and with members very conscious of the heavy responsibilities that would fall upon their shoulders during the coming months.

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## READERS’ FORUM.

### I Say “Thank You”

In the April issue of the “Labour Organiser” you ask to hear more from women members.

I am just one of the “rank and file” of the Labour Movement, but I thought you might be interested in a few remarks from a women member.

I am the mother of three young children and in my humble way I would like to say “Thank you” to our Labour Government for its achievements so far. During the past two years I have had to listen to a great deal of criticism against our Government from our own people, some of which has been healthy, and some bad.

For my part I am grateful to our Labour Government. It has served me well. My children have been our Government’s first consideration and, thank God, they have never gone hungry. Rich and poor alike have been fairly treated and that is the essence of Democratic Socialism.

I hear a great deal of “splits” in

our Movement. I see no reason to lose faith in our Government. I am as proud of Mr. Bevin’s untiring efforts as our Foreign Secretary as I am proud of our Ministers at home. Now is the time to take our Prime Minister’s words to heart. Let us close our ranks firmly and solidly behind our Labour Government.

They have achieved so much, and during the next few years, if we want them to carry on the grand work they have begun, they need every ounce of our support and co-operation. I am prepared to make sacrifices if need be to secure Democratic Socialism.

There will be many differences and difficulties to overcome, but I have faith in our Movement, and so long as Democratic Socialism, based on Christian principles, remains the foundation of our great Labour Movement, I, for one, have nothing to fear.

(Mrs.) ANNE LEE.

“Broadmayne,”  
272, Malden Road,  
New Malden.

# Forward With The League

By A. L. WILLIAMS, Assistant National Agent

*There is no reason why the Labour Party should not have a League of Youth half a million strong.*

THE Annual Conference decision on the League of Youth, which was readily accepted by the National Executive Committee, means that the Party has made up its mind about the best way of organising its young members.

The unfortunate history of the League of Youth in pre-war days was largely responsible for the many doubts about the effectiveness of this form of organisation.

The League had prospered until the United Front and People's Front period when the Communists started a big infiltration into Labour and other democratic bodies. The League of Youth was especially susceptible to the bogus appeals for unity in the struggle against Fascism, and Communist influence spread rapidly.

League meetings became battle grounds, on which those who wished to capture the League to use it against the official Labour Party fought against the loyal members who wished it to keep to its original purpose of serving the social, recreational and educational needs of the Party's young people. Later on a Trotskyist faction joined the battle.

## Confusion Prevailed

The resulting confusion caused many branches to go out of existence and general weakening of the League. Finally, the Party had to take drastic action resulting in the disbanding of the National Youth Advisory Committee and the Annual Conference, and the lowering of the maximum age limit to twenty-one years. All this and the coming of the war practically ended the League of Youth, though a few branches did manage to keep alive.

*The awakened political interest just before and since the General Election in 1945 resulted in a considerable increase in the number of League of Youth branches, and at the time of the Annual Conference the total was over three hundred.*

Many Divisional and Local Labour Parties, however, refused to form branches, since they believed that it was better both for the Party and for its young members, if they played their full part as individual members of the

Party and were not grouped into a League of Youth branch which, they believed, involved separation from the Party to some extent.

Others remembering their bitter experiences with the pre-war League of Youth, but appreciating that routine Party activity was not sufficient to attract young people to the Labour Party, set up youth groups and clubs of various kinds. Some of these have functioned very well, especially where a Party member has taken responsibility for them.

## Avoid Past Mistakes

While the Annual Conference decision means that a determined effort will now be made to build up the League of Youth (and with the raising of the age limit to twenty-five years this becomes easily practicable) the Party will wish to avoid past mistakes.

Unlike the youth organisations of other political parties the League of Youth will not become a separate organisation. Its membership will be confined to individual members of the Labour Party between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five, and its branches will not register decisions on political policy, as each member will have the right to participate in the discussions and decisions of the local Party to which he belongs.

League of Youth branches must be regarded as sections of the local Labour Parties. While the conduct of the branches must be left to their members, the local Labour Parties should keep a watchful eye on them, and without bossing should give them the help and guidance which undoubtedly they need.

## Educational and Social Activity

The emphasis will be on education and social activity. The Party needs a constant supply of young men and women to take the place of the old local and national leaders as they retire from the struggle. The League of Youth can be the training ground of the new leadership, where it can acquire a knowledge of the principles of Socialism and develop the spirit of fellowship, without which Labour will become just another political party.

*The League of Youth must not be regarded as a necessary nuisance. Reports of its activities and consideration of plans for its development should rank high on the agenda of Executive and General Committees.*

Naturally, branches of the League of Youth will wish to associate with each other in the organisation of rallies, week-end schools and similar projects which are beyond the resources of a single branch. The establishment of federations of branches is the responsibility of the Regional Councils of the Labour Party, and these have in their rules provision for the representation of federations at their Annual Meeting, and also for a League of Youth representative to sit on the Executive Committee.

The Regional Councils will give a lead to the Labour Parties in their areas in building up the League of Youth into a powerful organisation. While Transport House will do all it can in this connection it is obvious that the detailed work can only be done in the constituencies and in the regions.

#### **National Consultative Committee**

When a solid basis has been laid, a National Consultative Committee will be formed from regional representatives for the purpose of advising the National Executive on youth matters.

*Undoubtedly the Conservatives have made great progress in the organisation of young people, but with its total of five million members and twelve million voters there is no reason why the Labour Party should not have a League of Youth half a million strong. But this depends on the energy and the imagination with which the Party organisation gets down to this most important job. (See pages 16 and 17)*

### **JOWETT MEMORIAL FUND**

The Jowett Memorial Fund, created to perpetuate the memory of the Rt. Hon. F. W. Jowett, and his life's work for the cause of workers both nationally and internationally, was founded shortly after his death in 1944 "to provide assistance to students from the Trade Union and Labour Movement for the purpose of enabling them to continue their studies, either at home or abroad, of the problems affecting the economic benefits of the workers."

Assistance from the Fund is now available and students eligible to benefit from it should write to A. L. Brown, Secretary, Jowett Memorial Trust Fund, 7, Brassey Terrace, Bradford. The Trustees have fixed no tests but will consider each application on its merits.

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**CAS**

# "Dear Colleague"

By MAXINE HARRISON

*Miss Harrison, who is private secretary to Mr. Morgan Phillips, gives some useful tips on the art of good letter-writing.*

Once the Minutes of the meeting have been written up, the secretary finds himself (if he is methodical) with a list of things to be done; and, in one connection or another, most of these will require the writing of a letter in the first instance. Correspondence is often a tedious and depressing business, because unless a few clear and simple rules are observed it can become very involved.

## Carbon Copies

Most parties have access to a typewriter, in which case the taking of a carbon copy is a simple matter, but for those unfortunate secretaries who have no typewriter, a hard pen and a piece of soft carbon paper will save a good deal of time and trouble. It is *essential* to have a record of what has been written: it is the secretary's own safeguard. Copies should be kept in good order, either alphabetically by name of addressee, or by subject, or even by simply numbering the letters 1, 2, 3 as they are written, so that they are kept in date order. If you are answering a letter, attach a copy of your reply to it, so that you have a

history of what has happened on that particular issue.

The second rule is not quite so obvious, but it is a good plan to decide what the letter is going to be about, put it at the head of the letter, and then write about that and nothing else.

For instance, if you are writing to Blankshire Federation concerning your allocation of tickets for the Area Conference on such and such a date, and you suddenly remember at the end of the letter that you have been asked to approach the Federation secretary to lead a discussion group, don't tack on a final paragraph to that effect. It is unlikely that both matters will be dealt with at the same time, and there is a danger that one of them may be overlooked, particularly if action by two people is required. Write another letter, which can go in the same envelope: the two subjects are then quite distinct, and there is less likelihood of one being forgotten.

By putting your subject, "Tickets for Public Meeting on 18th November, 1948," and "Discussion Group, 12th June, 1948" on each letter, you can keep track of what has been done without reading through all the letters you have written, and it also helps the man receiving the letter to understand quickly what you are talking about.

## CAN ANY WARD BEAT THIS ?

*Thanks to the energies of its chairman and vice-chairman, Sanderstead Ward in South Croydon has recruited nearly 300 members in two years. In 1946, the ward was in a derelict state so members set out on a canvass to discover the addresses of Labour supporters. Then the chairman, Mr. T. W. Holliday and the vice-chairman, Mr. G. H. Nightingale, took over the job of recruiting new members. In all, 250 new members were brought in by their joint efforts. And Mr. Nightingale tells us that his age is 75. Success is attributed to the chairman and vice-chairman doing the job themselves. Can any ward beat this recruiting achievement?*

## Brevity and Clarity

This last point leads logically to another one. All of us have had letters which require reading and re-reading before we can decide what the writer wants to tell us. This is one of the main causes of short temper and discourtesy: I don't advocate the type of letter which says: *Discussion Group meeting on June 12th. Nobody here has time to lead it, what about you?* But it is infinitely preferable from all points of view to a page and a half of loose chat about the growth of the discussion group and the subjects they have already discussed, with a request for a leader, disguised as a compliment, at the end of the second sheet.

The type of letter which is most likely to receive prompt attention and an affirmative reply if possible is something like this:

## DISCUSSION GROUP MEETING

"The Bright Party discussion group will be meeting on Tuesday, June 22nd, 1948, at 7.30 in the Party Rooms at the above address to discuss the Marshall Plan and its effect on European economy. My Committee would be very glad if, in view of your special knowledge on the subject, you could spare the time to lead the Group on this occasion.

"The 6.45 'bus from Dull would arrive in Bright 'bus station at 7.15, and I could meet you there and take you to the Party Rooms. The last 'bus leaves Bright at 10.30, but no doubt the meeting will end at 9.30 or thereabouts in time to enable you to catch an earlier 'bus home.

"Perhaps you will let me know as early as possible if it will be convenient for you to come."

That tells the addressee all he wants to know, simply and clearly, and that is the main point to remember about any letter, whether it is asking a favour or dealing with a simple routine matter.

## Replies to Correspondence

When replying to a letter, it is a good plan to give your correspondent a clue as to which of his letters your reply refers. It is possible that his original letter to you may be quite a long way down on his filing system. Normally, for small organisations, the date of the letter and the subject will be enough, for instance:—

Mr. A. Small, 9th June, 1948  
Secretary,  
East Ward Labour Party,  
4, Long Street,  
BRIGHT.

Dear Alfred,

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Executive Committee at its meeting last night discussed your letter of May 18th, 1948, and approved your suggestions. I should be very glad if you could call in and discuss this with me some evening next week at your

convenience, about 7.30. Please let me know which evening you are coming.

However, where larger organisations are concerned, it is helpful if the full details given on the original letter can be quoted:—

Mr. S. Larger, 9th June, 1948  
Secretary,  
Blakshire Federation of Labour Parties,  
5, Little Street,  
DULL

Dear Colleague,

## ANNUAL AREA CONFERENCE

My Executive Committee at its recent meeting considered your letter of the 22nd May, 1948, reference SL/KJ/123  
.....

## Mode of Address

The mode of address depends upon how well you know the person concerned. "Dear Colleague," or "Dear Comrade" is the most usual way of addressing a fellow-member of the Labour Movement, with "Yours sincerely" as the subscription. "Dear Sir" and "Yours faithfully," being more formal, should only be used on business correspondence.

## Retribution

These few suggestions should help an overworked secretary to keep his correspondence in reasonable limits. But beware: however simple they may appear to be, if they are not followed, difficulties can crop up: and you may even receive a letter one day like this:

Dear Colleague,

With reference to your letter undated, I gather that one of the subjects you touch upon requires some action by me. My typist and I cannot decide whether you wish me to address a meeting or get you free tickets for the Area demonstration. Can you clarify this? You also mention receiving a letter from me. It would help me greatly in tracing this correspondence if you could give me the reference number quoted at the top of my letter  
.....

And so on.



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# Making Your Own Posters

By F. W. HICKMAN, Theydon Bois L.P.

*Here is a way of making posters at home that is both cheap and effective.*

In our village, we have found great difficulty in obtaining posters at reasonable prices in the small quantities we require. The maximum number we show for a big meeting is 24, and we are charged up to 25s. per dozen for them. In addition, there has been trouble with delivery dates and also with layouts.

So we have found a way of producing posters cheaply and speedily and which allows us to control the design and layout down to the last comma. Other Parties might like to hear details as to how this is done.

Those connected with industry and drawing offices will be familiar with what are known as blue prints and dye line prints. It is these which are used as display posters. For the uninitiated, I should say that on blue prints the lettering appears in white on an intense blue background. Dye line prints have a white background with black lettering.

## Preparing the "Negative"

The method is the same for both types. It is necessary to produce a "negative," and this is done quite simply by the drawing of the design in Indian ink on ordinary tracing paper. Parties which have among their members no artists or lettering experts willing to help, will have to find some other means of producing neat, attractive wording. (The sets of "Uno" stencils and pens are well-known and provide a simple, effective means of securing the desired result.) It is important to remember that *everything* which appears on the tracing paper "negative" will be reproduced on the final prints.

When the "negative" has been prepared, it can be dealt with in one of two ways. It can be taken to a firm specialising in printing. The prints are usually available within an hour or two and can be obtained in any quantities from one upwards.

The alternative is to make the prints at home and this is, of course, is much cheaper. Printing is done in exactly the same way as for ordinary photographic prints, i.e., the "negative" is placed in a glass-fronted frame (a picture frame does admirably), a sheet of sensitive paper is placed underneath

and the whole exposed to the sun or electric light. The paper is removed after exposure and the image is "fixed." In the case of blue and dye line prints, no chemicals are needed. It is necessary only to wash the sensitive paper in water permanently to fix the image. It is recommended that the prints be dried by placing on the inside of windows. When dry, they will simply fall off and should remain flat.

We have adopted as a standard size, a sheet measuring 20in. x 15in. Though this may be considered by some to be on the small side, it is eminently suitable for display in house windows and for attaching to small, permitted spaces and, say, telegraph poles.

## What About Costs?

The separate items of cost are concerned with (a) preparing the "negative," and (b) printing. Under the first heading must be included charges for tracing paper and Indian ink. Paper of the size recommended would cost 2½d. per "negative" (15/- per 20 yard roll, 30in. wide), and the ink would be of negligible value. Printing costs would depend on whether the work was done at home or by a firm. The sensitive paper costs 4/- for a 10-yard roll, 30in. wide, i.e., 1⅓d. per sheet measuring 20in. x 15in. Printing of this size by a specialist firm is charged at 8d. per sheet.

There are at least four obvious advantages of this method. It is cheap, especially if printing is done at home. Any quantity can be printed from the "negative." If an initial quantity is prepared and more are found to be necessary, they can be printed quite easily as there is no complicated type to be set up again.

Layout and design can be exactly to your own requirements.

Speed of production is rapid, even with a firm doing the printing.

The costs for a 20in. x 15in. poster (either dye line or blue print) are:—

### Home Printing

- |        |      |      |         |             |
|--------|------|------|---------|-------------|
| 1 doz. | 2½d. | plus | 1s. 4d. | = 1s. 6½d.  |
| 2 doz. | 2½d. | plus | 2s. 8d. | = 2s. 10½d. |

### Printing by Firm

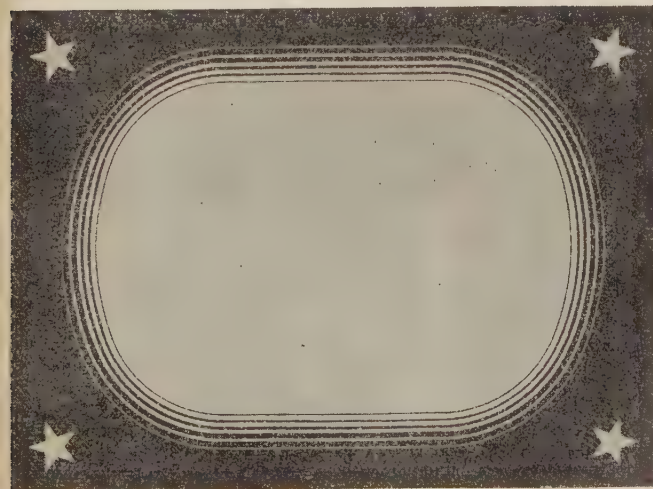
- |        |      |      |          |             |
|--------|------|------|----------|-------------|
| 1 doz. | 2½d. | plus | 8s. 0d.  | = 8s. 2½d.  |
| 2 doz. | 2½d. | plus | 16s. 0d. | = 16s. 2½d. |

# NEW PARTY POSTERS



There are three posters now available to help in this summer's "Forward Britain" campaign. Each is designed in a distinctive style and in a striking colour scheme to catch the public eye. The charming baby poster reproduced on this page is a study in red and black on white in double-crown size (1 poster 8d, 12 posters 6s. 6d. post free). The other two posters in this series are in crown size so they can be used as window bills if desired. One is in an original style bearing the slogan, "The Tories Talk, Labour Acts", the other "July 5, 1948—58" is of course, designed to boost Britain's Social Security D.Day. The prices post free for both these crown posters are 1 poster 6d., 12 posters 4s. 3d.

To help Parties in solving the difficult problem of a "lay-out" for their own poster notices and announcements, a special poster "blank" is available (reproduced below). With a striking cerise border, it can be used either vertically or horizontally for local announcements of meetings, dances or what you will. also in crown size (15in. by 20in.) prices are one poster 4d., 12 posters, 3s., post free.



# Let's Train Youth Leaders

By **ULRIC PICK**, Divisional Youth Organiser,  
Central Leeds L. of Y.

The Labour Party is a political Party expressing in the political field the aspiration of the Labour Movement. A youth movement for the Labour Party must therefore be an organisation which educates young people in the theoretical foundations of our movement and prepares them for work in the Labour Movement. If this education is not to start too late it must begin before young people have to vote, i.e., before they are 21 years of age.

There is one point I have been trying to push for some time—the need for trained Youth Organisers who would voluntarily, because of his or her socialist faith, teach young people in the ways of running an organisation, help them and represent them. He must be young enough to go on hikes and camping and willing to give up time for committee meetings. Standing outside the jurisdiction of the branch committee he could be a balancing influence, explaining to the branch if too many social activities take place or if a few bright lights are trying to make the branch meetings too much of a class-room affair. The training of these youth leaders for each Division through regional channels should be the first thing to be initiated from H.Q. Age is not so important as keenness to serve youth and socialism, the will to study and to teach, and the ability to enjoy things in company with young people. The lowest age should obviously be the minimum age for entry into the League, but would normally be between 20 and 30 years of age.

## Young People Need Help

Why am I advocating all this? Because the young people we are concerned with are neither grown up yet nor are they socialists, and without firm leadership they will not be able to even formulate a programme for one meeting. These young people are not just adults in a vest-pocket edition. Their physical and mental development is still in process and they need help even though scarcely one of them would agree that they do.

There is not one established youth organisation without these organisers. It is worth remembering, too, that no Youth Organisation in this country can exist without subsidies, either by the Education Authorities or by interested organisations. Neither can the League. It is quite impossible to run a youth club on the membership fees of the young people. And a youth club it must be, because no young man or woman is going to join except for what we can offer. Once firmly established (perhaps after a year if no outside interference occurs) the group will probably be able to meet most of its expenses. It is not only the meeting place that usually costs money. Leaflets and pamphlets must be given away to intending and new members. I would like to point out here that during the last year no new pamphlet specially designed for youth has appeared nor were the excellent H.Q. leaflets reprinted. To provide these at the lowest possible price is something else only H.Q. can do.

## Must Face Competition

Make no mistake about it, the establishment of a strong Labour Movement in Great Britain means competition with existing organisations, and compete we must with Municipal Youth Clubs, Church clubs, pre-Service units, and the 101 groups who like to have the best human material for their own use without leading young people to Socialism. A Song Book for Labour's Youth is just as important as camping equipment to be borrowed at cheap terms from regional organisations.

Summing up, I would say our needs are (1) to stimulate interest in youth work within the Party; (2) make clear to those interested what we want to achieve; (3) give the equipment to those Youth Organisers who are prepared to build up a Youth Organisation; and (4) have a real national H.Q. with regional organisations, based on Divisional or Ward Leagues of Youth.

# Five Points for Youth Membership

By VIC CLARK, Finchley and Friern D.L.P.

I was very interested in Reg. Underhill's comments on the League of Youth in the May "Labour Organiser," having come through League of Youth channels myself to active membership in the Friern Barnet Labour Party (Central Ward). My points are as follows:—

- (1) **Membership.** — With a high age limit there is always the danger of a communist cell as some inexperienced youths are attracted by communist ideology. However, if a careful watch is kept and advice freely given, I feel that it was a wise decision to raise the age limit to 25, especially in view of the number of young men serving with H.M. Forces.

Membership campaigns should be vigorously carried out immediately, canvassing Labour members and supporters first.

- (2) **Liaison.** — Delegates from the G.M.C. to the League of Youth should attend regularly to give advice and guidance. League members, in their turn, should be encouraged to attend their Ward

Meetings, G.M. and Divisional Committees with delegates to give a report.

- (3) **Training.** — Every League of Youth Officer should be trained individually to carry out his duties efficiently. Constitution should be explained simply and tactfully.
- (4) **Social Activities.** — The League of Youth branch should elect a strong social committee to arrange rambles, cycle runs, camps, theatre outings, dramatics, etc.
- (5) **Political Activities.** — There is always a nucleus of members who are "politically inclined." They should form a political study group, distribute attractive literature and influence others to join with them.

Friern Barnet League of Youth was formed last October and now has a membership of over 100. They hold joint social functions with the Party and helped in the recent U.D.C. election to win a seat for Labour. Their activities are mainly social; politics seem rather dry and frightening, but as they grow older I feel sure they will want to find out more about the art of local and central government and play their part in building a progressive Socialist world.

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## RETIREMENT OF W. H. BARTON, J.P.

Readers will join with us in wishing a happy retirement to Bill Barton after his life devoted to service in the Party. Starting his career as Secretary to Burnley I.L.P. in 1905, he held a number of posts before being appointed Secretary and Agent to Liverpool T.C. and L.P. in 1924 where he has remained until his retirement last month. His activities in Liverpool are certainly too many to enumerate. As a member of the Liverpool City Council from 1929-47, he was chairman or deputy chairman of several committees and saw Labour representation on the City Council grow from eight in 1924 to 60 in 1947. He was appointed a magistrate in 1929 and among other activities was Joint Secretary and Organiser for Holidays at Home for Liverpool Corporation and a member of the Lancashire and Cheshire Whitley Council.

# Members, Voters and Cars

By JOHN PINKERTON

*Here are some of important amendments made to the Representation of the People Bill during its passage through the House of Commons.*

The Representation of the People Bill has now passed through all its stages in the House of Commons, and will now be sent to the House of Lords to be discussed. In its passage through the Commons it has been amended in many ways and new clauses have been added.

Some of these amendments have been of a minor character and some major. It is with these latter I wish to deal in these pages.

One of the most important amendments made has been to increase the number of constituencies by 17, making the total 625; each constituency returning one Member, (this figure includes the 12 Northern Ireland constituencies). The present membership of the House is 640. This amendment, therefore, represents only a reduction of 15, as against 32 as originally proposed.

By the increasing of the number of constituencies on the original proposals, the anomaly of having a number of constituencies with over 80,000 electors has been removed, and a precedent has been laid down which will have its effect in future redistribution.

The proposal that local government electors having only a non-resident qualification should be allowed a postal vote, whether or not they fulfilled the conditions as required for other postal voters, was the subject of much criticism, particularly in city areas. This provision has now been altered and non-resident electors will have to vote in person excepting where they fulfil the conditions necessary to be placed on the absent voters list.

A further amendment will now make it impossible for a person to have two votes in the same local government area, although he might have both a residence and non-resident qualification, his or her right to vote will be on the residence qualification without any choice as has applied in the past.

In the past a person could claim a non-resident vote for local government purposes by owning any land or premises irrespective of its rateable value. The Bill as amended requires that the rateable value of the property shall be not less than £10 before he qualifies for the non-resident vote.

A new clause dealing with the appointment of polling places in local government elections will remove problems that have arisen in the past. Its effect is to make every local government polling place the same as the parliamentary polling place. This will curb any arbitrary tendencies of mayors or clerks to councils in whom has been vested the right to appoint such places up to now. If a polling place in any area is not considered suitable and easily accessible to the greatest number of electors, 30 such electors will have the right to make representations to the Home Secretary for the alteration of the place.

## Maximum Expenditure

Much speculation has been made as to whether the proposed legal maximum expenditure for parliamentary elections would be sufficient to conduct elections efficiently in view of the high cost of printing and other services. The original figure proposed was £450, plus 1d. per elector in borough constituencies, and plus 1½d. per elector in county constituencies.

To make a comparison of the original proposals as against the present maximum let us take a borough constituency of 50,000 electors. The present allowed figure would be £1,091—under the original proposals it would be £658. In a county constituency of like electorate the maximum would be at present £1,325—under the original proposals this would drop to £762. The reduction in both instances is very considerable.

The amendment now incorporated in the Bill leaves the basic figure of £450 but increases the fee per elector to 1½d. for borough and 2d. for county constituencies; on the basis of 50,000 electors this makes the allowance £762 and £866 respectively.

The new clause which was very hotly debated was the proposal to restrict the number of cars which could be used for conveying electors to and from the poll. A number of Labour back benchers sought to abolish the use of cars entirely, but this was considered impracticable for a number of reasons.

The Government's proposals now in-

cluded in the Bill go a long way to making their use more equitable.

### Cars On Polling Day

It is now laid down that the number of cars used by each candidate for the specific purpose of conveying electors to and from the poll must not exceed one for every 1,500 electors in a county, and one for every 3,500 electors in a borough constituency.

In a constituency of 50,000 the number will be 34 in a county and 20 in a borough.

Each car so used will have to be registered by the Returning Officer and a certificate of authorisation will be issued for each car up to the maximum number allowed.

Any person using a car for the con-

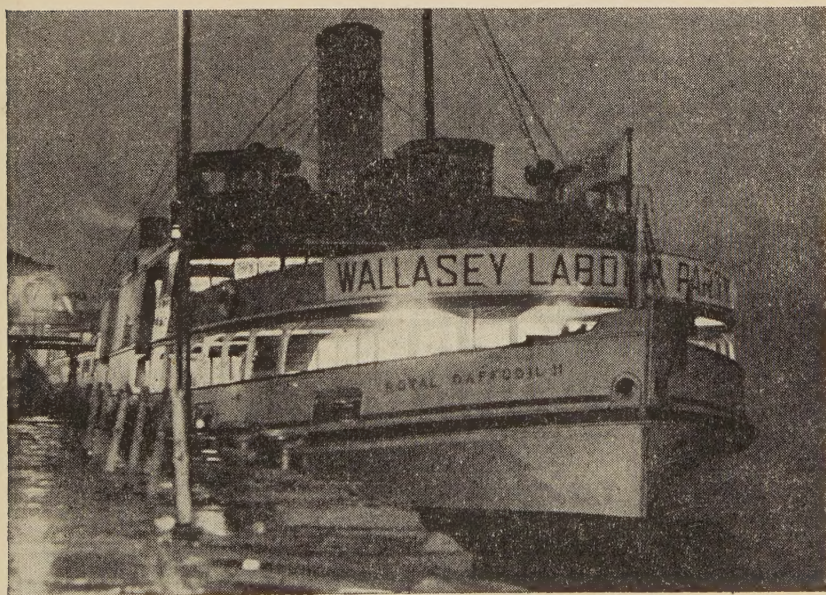
veyance of electors without a certificate of authorisation will be guilty of an illegal practice. This does not prevent a person using his own car to take himself or the members of his household to vote, but this condition will be strictly enforced.

The provision only applies to parliamentary elections. It has been impracticable to work out a suitable scheme for local government elections because of the great disparity between the electorates of wards in boroughs as well as rural districts.

These are only a few of the changes. The House of Lords may make further amendments. Whether they do so or not I hope to deal more fully with the provisions in a series of articles when the Bill finally becomes law.

---

## Their May Day Afloat



*Picture by Medley & Bird*

Carrying Wallasey Labour Party's banner, Wallasey's ferryboat, "Royal Daffodil II," awaits the 600 members and friends of Wallasey Trades Council and Labour Party to embark for a special May Day carnival dance cruise. It was the first time on Merseyside, Labour Day had been celebrated afloat.

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